

Fr. Martin's Reflection – March 6, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The wonderful thing about St Patrick's Day, is that everyone who wants to be, is Irish. Well that's how I see it. I remember my first St. Patrick's Day in New York and seeing all these people of different nationalities and skin color wearing big badges with 'Kiss Me I'm Irish.' It made me very proud that so many people wanted to celebrate with the Irish what was good and wholesome about their faith and culture. I know sometimes when we celebrate too long the 'good' can become 'sullied' and the 'wholesome' can become 'unwholesome.' But isn't that life? We start off with the best of intentions to do good and wholesome things in life and somehow we sully what or make unhealthy what we do.

St. Patrick's first experience of Ireland wasn't a good one; he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland and sold into slavery. The experience was despicable and by the grace of God he escaped and found his way home. For many of us we would never have darkened the door of Ireland again, but Patrick heard the voice of God and the call of the Irish people. He became a priest and returned to evangelize the Irish.

What jumps out at me is, when we are at our worst, God is at God's best. Ireland was at its worst in the fifth century and God heard the cry of the people and sent Patrick. We can change Ireland to the name of any nation, state, diocese, parish, family or person. God always listens for the cries of the people – God is continuously looking for the modern day 'Patricks' to send to God's people. Will we allow ourselves to hear the call and will we go?

Our Lenten Journey

I'm hoping Lent has got off to a good start for you. If you, like me, find yourself with a piece of candy in your mouth and then realize you are meant to be off candy – well that didn't last long. The temptation is to give up - but don't, just start again. We have opportunities to help us refocus with our daily masses, Wednesday holy hour, prayer groups and Stations of the Cross. Let us pray for each other and encourage each other. Offer a personal invitation to a friend, neighbour or family member to come and pray together. Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered I am there among them.'

St Patrick's Prayer

**May the Strength of God pilot us. May the Power of God preserve us.
May the Wisdom of God instruct us. May the Hand of God protect us.
May the Way of God direct us. May the Shield of God defend us.
May the Host of God guard us against the snares of the evil ones,
Against temptations of the world. May Christ be with us!
May Christ be in us; Christ be over all!
May your Salvation, Lord, always be ours,
This day, O Lord, and evermore. Amen**



“Beannachtaí na Féile Padraig Ort.”

Fr. Martin